

# South Dakota National Guard

## Public Affairs Office

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## **National Guard, allied nation partnership benefits local communities**

By Spc. Carl Johnson – 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CUSTER, S.D. – South Dakota Army National Guard, Danish and Canadian Army soldiers partnered together to complete a number of engineer projects during the 33rd annual Golden Coyote training exercise.

Soldiers from the SDARNG's 155th Engineer Company and the Danish Army's 3rd Construction Battalion worked together to remove an aging bridge and construct a new one for pedestrian use in Custer State Park, June 15.

Building the bridge allowed the American and Danish Soldiers to train closely together and the new bridge will provide increased access and ease of use for park visitors.

"This project allowed us to combine our skill sets with those of the Danish Soldiers," said Spc. Christopher Liebel, vertical construction engineer for the 155th. "The new bridge is also a lot wider than the old one, which will make the area more handicap accessible."

Working together in a training environment will help the Soldiers understand each other better when they are deployed.

"It is good education for us," said Sgt. 1st Class Alex Jensen, construction engineer with the Danish Army. "It helps us know what we need to do to accomplish the mission together when we are overseas."

There are several construction projects going on throughout the Black Hills, said Capt. Cory Gaudet of the Canadian Army's 38th Combat Engineer Regiment. The 38th has oversight for all of the engineer projects that are being conducted during the exercise.

The construction projects not only provide great training value for Soldiers from multiple countries but also benefit the local community.

"All of the projects are going well and the coordination between us, the Americans, and the Danes has been excellent," said Gaudet. "All of the project commanders had a good understanding of the time, space and materials necessary to complete their assigned projects, which made our job easier. We also wanted to make sure that the projects we oversee for this exercise were not limited to training value only but would provide a benefit to the local citizens for years to come."

The South Dakota office of Game, Fish and Parks also assisted with coordination of various projects in the state parks.

"It is great to have the Guard's skills, manpower and materials available for these types of projects," said Jayme Severyn, building engineer for Custer State Park. "It frees up our resources to do even more to make the park experience as good as we possibly can for all visitors."

High resolution photos are available at [www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard](http://www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard)



**170615-Z-FO002-0001:** U.S. Army Spc. Chris Leibel, vertical construction engineer for the South Dakota Army National Guard's 155th Engineer Company and Danish Army Sgt. 1st Class Alex Jensen, construction engineer for the Danish Army's 3rd Construction Battalion, lift up on a bridge rail while U.S. Army Pfc. Kyler Fink, vertical construction engineer with the 155th, hits the rail with a sledgehammer near the Custer State Park visitor's center, June 15, 2017. American and Danish Soldiers worked together to remove an aging bridge and build a new one as a part of the 33rd Golden Coyote training exercise. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson)



**170615-FO002-0002:** Danish Army Cpl. Rune Jensen, construction engineer for the Danish Army's 3rd Construction Battalion, carries a board for a bridge rail while U.S. Army Pfc. Kyler Fink, vertical construction engineer with the South Dakota Army National Guard's 155th Engineer Company, waits to secure the board to the posts near the Custer State Park visitor's center, June 15, 2017. The project provided a joint training opportunity for Soldiers from different countries as well as a benefit to park visitors. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson)



**170615-FO002-0003:** U.S. Army Pfc. Kyler Fink, vertical construction engineer with the South Dakota Army National Guard's 155th Engineer Company, attaches a slat to a bridge post while Danish Army Cpl. Rune Jensen, construction engineer for the Danish Army's 3rd Construction Battalion, and U.S. Army Spc. Chris Leibel, of the 155<sup>th</sup>, hold the board in place near the Custer State Park visitor's center, June 15, 2017. The Soldiers worked together to build a pedestrian bridge that will provide increased access to the park for all visitors, as a part of the 33rd Golden Coyote training exercise. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson)



**170615-FO002-0004:** Danish Army Sgt. 1st Class Alex Jensen, squad leader for the project and construction engineer for the Danish Army's 3rd Construction Battalion, and Jayme Severyn, building engineer for Custer State Park observe as Soldiers from the South Dakota Army National Guard's 155th Engineer Company attach an aging bridge to a crane hook near the Custer State Park visitor's center, June 15, 2017. The American and Danish soldiers coordinated with park staff to remove the old bridge and build a new one as a part of the 33rd Golden Coyote training exercise. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson)



**170615-FO002-0005:** Soldiers from the South Dakota Army National Guard's 155th Engineer Company and the Danish Army's 3rd Construction Battalion work together to remove an aging bridge via crane near the Custer State Park visitor's center, June 15, 2017. The American and Danish Soldiers worked together to build a new bridge that will provide increased access for pedestrians that use the area around the visitor's center. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,** please contact the SDNG Public Affairs Office at (605) 737-6721 or e-mail [ng.sd.sdarnng.list.pao@mail.mil](mailto:ng.sd.sdarnng.list.pao@mail.mil)